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SENATOR HENRY JACKSON INTERVIEWED

WALTER BRUNER: "Senator Jackson, as the newest member of the Central Intelligence Agency Subcommittee, do you favor a full-scale investigation of the CIA?"

SENATOR JACKSON: "No."

BRUNER: "I'm Walt Bruner, WTTG Medromedia News, sitting in for Mark Evans, who is on a speaking tour in California."

"Welcome to Metromedia's 'Opinion: Washington.'"

"Our guest here in our Washington studios is Senator Henry Jackson, Democrat of Washington, a veteran member of the Senate Armed Services Committee who, just this week, was named to its Central Intelligence Subcommittee."

"Our guest reporter is Peter Lisagor, nationally syndicated columnist for the Chicago Daily News."

CPYRGHT

"In a minute, Pete, let's question Senator Jackson further on the CIA controversy."

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BRUNER: "Our guest is Senator Henry Jackson of Washington."

"And now, for the first question, here is Peter Lisagore."

CPYRGHT

2

LISAGORE: "Senator Jackson, one can understand perhaps why the CIA moved to subsidize students in the 1950's when we were at the height of the Cold War, when we were in a period of some hysteria here in this country during the McCarthy time. But was it wise to continue that when the Cold War began to subside and when that atmosphere of hysteria disappeared?"

JACKSON: "I think there was the continuing need for assistance to these groups. Of course, the question that one must ask, 'Was it necessary to continue it that long?' I think in retrospect it would have been wiser to either turn it over to the State Department or to make a real effort among the various private foundations to get them to help.

"One must remember, however, that this is not a CIA decision. This -- the CIA operates directly under the National Security Council, and they get their orders and directives from there.

"It's my understanding that, in connection with the educational program, that the State Department was anxious that this be done by the CIA."

BRUNER: "Senator, are you suggesting that the President not only knew but ought to have known about this activity?"

JACKSON: "Well, I can't say whether the President knew about this specific activity; however, all four Presidents, going back to Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson, do have the responsibility under the statute, as Chairman of the National Security Council, to know in general as to what is going on.

"I am unable to say whether President Johnson knew specifically, but I am sure that all of the Presidents that I've referred to had some general knowledge of this matter."

BRUNER: "Well, do you think we're being just a little naive in being surprised the CIA is involved in domestic things like the National Student Association?"

JACKSON: "Well, the CIA is not involved in domestic matters. The CIA, of course, does have offices in the United States, but those offices relate to work that within their jurisdiction abroad,

CPYRGHT

and when the information came out with reference to the student activities, of course, it related to student activities abroad. The CIA's not been involved in any domestic matters as such.

"I know it appears to be confusing because the location of these various groups and foundations are here in the United States, but they've been very circumspect about staying out of purely domestic matters."

BRUNER: "Senator, there's a feeling that the students were somehow subverted by this CIA money, and I've noticed that most of these students today -- or the Association itself -- opposes a lot of Administration policies; for example: the war in Vietnam, the admission of Communist China to the U. N. Why the uproar in view of the fact that these kids seem to have maintained their detachment and a certain amount of idealism?"

JACKSON: "Well, I think it's outrageous to infer and assume that the students were subverted. I've heard of these rumors, but I know of no incidence and we have not been able to obtain a single situation in which students were subverted.

"The CIA was not involved in any program of that kind. Now, as a matter of fact, according to the accounts in the newspapers, it would appear that aid went to foundations as far right as Peter O'Donnell in Texas, who was an all-out Goldwater man, to Norman Thomas in New York, who is hardly a Goldwaterite. It seems to me that the CIA was very circumspect in seeing to it that the aid went to those foundations and groups that, in general, would help to properly portray American foreign policy and the American position in national security matter abroad. And I think this is in the best interest of our country."

BRUNER: "I wasn't speaking of subverted in the ideological sense. I'm sure we'd agree with that. I'm thinking of subverting them by a secret subsidy, having them represent your government really when, in reality abroad, they were thought to be free agents."

JACKSON: "It is my understanding the funds had no strings attached. In other words, it's this old argument about Federal aid, shall we say, to education. There were no strings attached.

The money was turned over and, of course, the government knew in advance what kind of a group that was involved in obtaining the money. They wouldn't turn it over to a group, knowingly, that would be against the best interests of our government. And, therefore, to assume that the CIA was trying to influence -- this is the key thing -- influence opinion within these groups is absolutely wrong."

LISAGORE: "Well, now, what about reports that the Peace Corps has also been influenced to some degree by such organizations as the CIA?"

JACKSON: "I know of no instance in which the Peace Corps has been influenced in any manner, shape or form by the CIA. What's happened now, is because the National Students Association situation has come to light, I -- all kinds of rumors are flying all over, and CIA has become a prime target. I think the real tragedy is that some of these people, and I just say some, of course, are opposed to the CIA. They would like to destroy the CIA and discredit it. And I can't think of anything more tragic to the long-term security of the United States and the effectiveness of the United States in foreign and defense policy than to have that happen."

LISAGORE: "Are you sure that you know everything the CIA is doing? Could it be doing...."

JACKSON: "I don't claim to know everything, but I -- I just said that, you ask about the Peace Corps, and I've given you an answer."

LISAGORE: "But could they be doing things that even the Senate watchdog Committee is not aware of?"

JACKSON: "Well, I've just gone on the Committee and I do not want to claim to be that well informed. I do know that the work of the CIA is followed very closely. The budget is handled by the same group within the Congress, and they scrutinize the budget quite carefully. Obviously, they can't follow it in every detail."

CPYRGHT

"But I want to say, in general, that the CIA is monitored as an agency a lot better than some other agencies that other Committees have responsibility to the Congress in both the House and Senate. There is a closer scrutiny, and I emphasize this, of what the CIA is doing than is the case of some other departments.

"Senator Mansfield has called on this Congress 'to stop, look and listen,' to have Committees on Legislative Oversight. Some of these Committees are just now beginning to look at the departments over which they have legislative responsibilities. This has been going on in the case of the CIA for many, many years."

LISAGORE: "Senator, could you draw a moral distinction between the FBI subsidizing people to infiltrate into various organizations, domestic organizations, and the CIA subsidizing students to represent the American point of view overseas?"

JACKSON: "Well, of course, no one complains when the FBI makes an effort, and which they should do, and very properly should do, to infiltrate communist groups, communist-front groups, right-wing groups, such as the Klu Klux Klan and other right-wing affiliates. No one complains about that, and, of course, this is essential. But in the case of the CIA, when they try to promote abroad the vital national interests of the United States, in a completely objective way, covering the whole spectrum of American politics, as I indicated, from Texas to New York, it seems to me that they are being singled out unfairly and unjustly. And this organization, in my judgment, has the finest, the best professional people in American government."

LISAGORE: "Well, Senator, though, supporting a group like the National Students Association does not seem to be something that people of the United States would object to. It's not a borderline case, which I think everyone supports and recognizes the value of our young people in college. Why in the world would government funds be channelled to this organization through the CIA? Why not -- why not make it an open appropriation to them if they need...."

CPYRGHT

CPYRGHT

6

JACKSON: "Bear in mind that at the time when this program was initiated it probably, in the judgment of those who followed it closely, would have hurt our representation abroad if it had been known the American government was subsidizing some of these programs.

"Now, the truth is that the effort made by the CIA had a devastating effect on the communist youth movement. The international conference that they held in Vienna just blew up, and the one in Helsinki was a disaster. And my recollection is that they have not held a conference since.

"Now, the communist governments, of course, do subsidize. Well, let's face it, who else is there to subsidize their programs? It's all government, and we have gone into these conferences in the past at a disadvantage, and if it hadn't been for this program some of these international conferences could have been a disaster to American foreign policy.

"Now, the CIA gets no credit for that. Of course, they don't get credit for all the terrific things that they have done. It's only the things that have come to light where mistakes have occurred and, of course, they are fallible. They're not infallible."

BRUNER: "Senator, isn't it a fact that in that period of the '50's the CIA was probably the only agency in town that could have gotten money for this purpose. The State Department could not have gotten money to send allegedly left-wing students overseas."

JACKSON: "Oh, you're so right. The truth is, and I recall this period very well. I was on the so-called McCarthy Committee, and too many people have forgotten that there were certain representatives going abroad, burning books, pulling books off the shelf, let alone try to get direct aid from USIA or some other agency within the State Department would have been well nigh impossible. And if we hadn't worked through some of the more liberal, and even leftist groups, the effectiveness of the American position abroad in foreign policy could have been a disaster.

"And that is why that, during the '50's, the program, I think,

CPYRGHT

was successful to the extent that I've previously indicated, because it was handled on a covert basis."

BRUNER: "Excuse me, Senator; I must interrupt.

"'Opinion: Washington' is probing the facts behind the headlines about the CIA, by interviewing Senator Henry Jackson, Democrat of Washington, one of the most respected men on Capitol Hill.

"My fellow reporter is Peter Lisagor, Chicago Daily News.

"I'm Wally Bruner, WTTG News.